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## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

For immediate release through September 30, 2024

### **Urban Forestry Division suspends regular programs to address storm damage**

Following the unprecedented storm on July 24, 2024, Parks and Recreation's Urban Forestry Division is temporarily suspending regular operations to prioritize storm recovery efforts. The Division has received numerous requests for tree pruning and planting, but all available resources are currently dedicated to addressing storm-related damage. Non-storm-related tree pruning and planting requests will be logged and reviewed once recovery efforts are complete, which could take several months to a year.

Urban Forestry Specialist Marie Ducharme says the department is conducting a comprehensive citywide inventory to identify storm-damaged trees in the City right-of-way. "Trained arborists, alongside dedicated volunteers, are systematically surveying all neighborhoods to assess the condition of over 30,000 public trees spread across approximately 45 square miles of city streets," Ducharme says. "This includes trees with broken or hanging branches, lodged debris, and those that have suffered structural damage due to the storm. Trees with dangerous limbs or weakened trunks are marked for pruning or removal to ensure public safety and protect surrounding properties. It is critical to address these immediate hazards before resuming routine maintenance and other tree care services."

Forestry crews will prioritize the removal and pruning of high-risk trees. Due to the volume of work, the Urban Forestry Division is suspending Spring 2025 tree planting and volunteer events scheduled for Fall 2024. We appreciate residents' patience with non-emergency requests, as response times will be longer than usual. If possible, we ask residents to delay reporting non-storm-related issues until our service capacity improves.

To report non-emergency storm damage to City trees or request tree debris pickup, visit [www.missoulaparks.org](http://www.missoulaparks.org). For more information, contact the Urban Forestry Division at 406-552-6235 or email [citytrees@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:citytrees@ci.missoula.mt.us). Learn more about storm recovery for trees at [ArborDay.org](http://ArborDay.org).

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